THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (e). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Voluntary Retirement Scheme

5803. SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :
SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce a new voluntary retirement scheme for the employees engaged in industrial units functioning in public sector of the country;

(b) if so, the outlines of this proposed draft scheme;

(c) whether the Govt. have identified the number of surplus employees in public sector institutions before introducing this scheme; and

(d) if so, the number of surplus employees engaged in these public sector institutions uptill April, 1996 ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). A Voluntary Retirement Scheme for the employees of Central Public Sector Enterprises was introduced in October 1988 with a view to reducing surplus manpower. Th scheme is still in operation. The option to avail benefit of the scheme is with the employees.

(c) and (d). Managements of Public Sector Undertakings are to identify the number of surplus staff depending on their requirements, from time to time.

Setting up New Industrial Areas

5804. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the government of Madhya Pradesh seeking approval for setting up of new Industrial areas in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the approval of the Union Government has since been accorded; and

(d) if not, by when the decision is likely to be taken on the above proposals ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (d). No, Sir. Setting up of new Industrial areas in the State is a subject being looked after by the concerned State Government.

[English]

Manufacture of EMD

5805. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) the number of letters of intent issued by the Government for manufacture of Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide (EMD) and the letters out of them converted into industrial licences till now;

(b) the number of licences of various categories of Drycell manufacture in the country alongwith their installed and production capacity; and

(c) the estimated quantity of raw material for the above licences produced indigenously and the quantity imported during the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) to (c). A letter of Intent issued on 30.1.1987 was later converted into an Industrial Licence dated 2.4.1991 in favour of M/s. Magno Mining Company Limited, Hyderabad (A.P.) for setting up a unit at Vizianagram, Andhra Pradesh for manufacture of Electrolytic Manganese Dioxide for a capacity of 2500 tonnes per annum. There are 22 licensed units in the country for manufacture of Dry Cell with a total installed capacity of 5872000 Thousands Nos. Annual Production during 1995-96 was 11,28,700 Thousands Nos. Information regarding indigenous and imported raw materials used for the purpose is not being centrally maintained.

Duty on Timber Trade

5806. SHRI SOMJIBHAI DAMOR : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether directives issued to the customs authorities in Manipur with regard to redemption fines on timber flowing along Indo-Myanmar border ;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the redemption fines is quite high in the prevailing circumstances of the trade ;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the same;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) No such directives have been issued

(b) Timber being smuggled into India from Myanmar is liable to confiscation and offenders liable to penalty under the Customs Act, 1962. The adjudicating authority who adjudges each case is empowered to give an option to the offender in such cases to pay a fine in lieu of confiscation which is also called redemption fine.

The adjudication orders passed in above cases were found to be defective, hence the Customs Department has preferred appeals before the Appellate Authorities concerned. Appeals are still pending.

(c) to (e). Does not arise in view of (a) & (b) above.